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L E T T E R

TO THE

Right Honourable and Honourable

T H E

T R U S T E E S

O F T H E

Linen Manufacture.

B Y

ROB. STEPHENSON, Merchant.

D U B L I N :

Printed by JAMES HUNTER, 1759.

B. T. R.

of the



THE

OF THE

Large Manuscripts.

BY

ROD. STEPHENSON

DUBLIN:

Printed by J. J. Moore

To the Right Honourable and Honourable the Trustees of the Linen Manufacture.

GENTLEMEN,

IT is humbly presumed that every Acquisition, which may add to the Wealth or Improvement of this Country, ought to be communicated to such as have it in their Power to serve the Publick, and it is from this Motive, that I have been induced to lay before your Honourable Board such Papers and Accounts as have been transmitted to me by different Persons, desirous of extending the Linen Manufacture in *Great-Britain* and *Ireland*.

The following Schemes and Progress of the Trustees of *Scotland*, the Imports of foreign Linens into *England*, taken at different Periods during a Course of twenty-five Years, and the Exports of *Ireland* in Linen and Yarn during the Course of fifty-nine Years, may, perhaps, assist you in resolving what Branches of the Manufacture are fittest to be encouraged.

The Increase of the different Branches of the Linen Manufacture in *Great Britain* and this Kingdom, compared with the Decrease or Increase of the Imports in foreign Linens, will sufficiently demonstrate wherein particular Species have been too much attended to by those concerned in the Linen Manufacture, whilst others, more useful to the Publick from their Extent and Facility in being brought to Perfection, are either totally unknown or neglected.

The superior Advantages accruing to the Inhabitants of a Country employed in this Manufacture, compared with any other Branch of Business, are so generally known, that it would be to no Purpose to enter into a Proof thereof: It is our Staple consequently deserves peculiar Attention; and, not-

withstanding the Progress in extending and improving it in some Counties in *Ulster* hath been very great of late Years, yet must the Manufacture be considered as in a State of Infancy, compared with many Parts of *Germany* and *France*; and it is even believed, by People of Experience, that there are as many Looms employed in the Linen, Cheque and Cotton Branches in *Manchester*, and twenty Miles round it, as there are throughout this Kingdom.

The Numbers and Capacity of the Inhabitants, the Fertility of the Soil, the general Convenience of Fire and Water, and the happy Medium of Heat and Cold, all contribute to make this Island the most extensive in the Linen Manufacture of any Country known, if the Foundation already generally laid were improved, and pursued with Attention and Perseverance.

To effect this with Certainty and Expedition depends entirely on the Measures of your Honourable Board, in the Distribution of the Linen Fund, in obtaining such necessary Laws as may, by executing themselves, effectually restrain the Working People from forming themselves into Combinations, which always precede Idleness and Rioting, and above all to preserve the Reputation of such Linen or Cotton Manufactures as are exposed to Sale either at Home or Abroad.

Before farther Observations are made, it is necessary to submit to your Examination the Progress of *Scotland* for thirty-one Years in the different Branches of the Linen and Cotton Manufactures, with the different Species and Estimate of their Linens stamped for Sale the last Year, and the medium Value of their Linens taken at three different Periods, viz. in the Years ending the 1st of *November*, 1728, 1745 and 1758, and the Plans of Encouragement proposed by their Trustees for the Linen Manufacture this present Year.

ACCOMPT

ACCOUNT of LINEN CLOTH for
Sale, stamped in *Scotland*, from the
1st of *November*, 1727, distinguish-
ing the Quantity and Value annual-
ly, to the 1st of *November*, 1758.

		Yards.	Value.
1727 to 1st Nov. 1728	2,183,978	£.103,312	9 3
1728 . . . 1729	3,225,155 6-8	114,383	19 8 6-12
1729 . . . 1730	3,755,622 2-8	131,262	15 11 9-12
1730 . . . 1731	3,891,573	145,656	14 3
1731 . . . 1732	4,384,832 2-8	168,322	14 10 6-12
1732 . . . 1733	4,720,105 1-8	182,766	2 1 3-12
1733 . . . 1734	4,893,499	185,224	3 11
1734 . . . 1735	4,880,633 4-8	177,466	3 9 11-12
1735 . . . 1736	4,538,478 4-8	168,177	13 0 10-12
1736 . . . 1737	4,721,420 6-8	183,620	13 9 7-12
1737 . . . 1738	4,666,011 5-8	185,026	11 9 6-12
1738 . . . 1739	4,801,537 4-8	196,068	16 11 11-12
1739 . . . 1740	4,609,672 6-8	188,777	16 5 5-12
1740 . . . 1741	4,858,190 6-8	187,658	15 3 8-12
1741 . . . 1742	4,431,450 4-8	191,689	6 6 3-12
1742 . . . 1743	5,061,311	215,927	6 7 7-12
1743 . . . 1744	5,480,727	229,364	12 3 10-12
1744 . . . 1745	5,536,925 7-8	224,252	8 0 4-12
1745 . . . 1746	5,486,334	222,870	13 2 2-12
1746 . . . 1747	6,661,788 4-8	262,866	10 2 6-12
1747 . . . 1748	7,353,098 1-8	293,864	12 11 6-12
1748 . . . 1749	7,360,286 4-8	322,045	8 9 5-8
1749 . . . 1750	7,572,540 3-8	361,736	12 5 7-8
1750 . . . 1751	7,886,374 6-8	367,167	11 6 2-12
1751 . . . 1752	8,759,943 1-8	409,047	6 7 6-12
1752 . . . 1753	9,422,593 6-8	445,321	18 1 1-12
1753 . . . 1754	8,914,369	406,816	8 0 7-12
1754 . . . 1755	8,122,472 3-8	345,349	14 6 1-12
1755 . . . 1756	8,547,153 5-8	367,721	10 10 11-12
1756 . . . 1757	9,764,408 7-8	401,511	9 9 7-12
1757 . . . 1758	10,624,435 5-8	424,141	10 7 3-12

ACCOUNT

ACCOMPT of the different Species of Linen
stamped in *Scotland*, from the 1st of *November*,
1757, to the 1st of *November*, 1758.

	Yards.
White Linen,	2,002,030 2-8
Brown Linen,	2,343,302 4-8
Harns, Strackins and Tweels,	317,073 6-8
Diaper and Dornock,	176,579 4-8
* Edinburghs and Doulafs,	2,172,725 2-8
Striped Linens,	78,162 6-8
Checks and Bengals,	1,072,275 6-8
Tickens,	187,660 2-8
Checkered Handkerchiefs,	1,000,293 4-8
Scots Muslin Handkerchiefs,	383,634
Carolines and Lawns,	253,988 3-8
§ Glasgows,	555,145 6-8
† Paisleys,	48,536 4-8
Callico and Sattiret,	14,352 6-8
Nankeens, Britannias, &c.	18,674 6-8

10,624,435 5-8

Valuation of the above.	Yards.	Yards.
At and under 6d. per Yd.	3,799,960 1-8	
Above 6d. and not exceed- ing 1s.	4,810,788 5-8	
Above 1s. and not exceed- ing 1s. 6d.	1,394,306 7-8	
Above 1s. 6d. and not ex- ceeding 2s. 6d.	378,823 7-8	
All above 2s. 6d. per Yd.	240,556 1-8	

10,624,435 5-8

Medium Value taken for three different Years.

	Yards.	Medium Value.
Years ending 1st Nov. 1728.	2,183,978 £. 103,312 9 3	11½d.
1745.	5,536,925 7-8 224,252 8 4-12	9¾d.
1758.	10,624,435 5-8 424,141 10 7¾	9¼d.

* *Edinburghs* are of the *Fabrick* of *Osnaburghs*.

§ *Glasgows* are striped, checked or flowered *Muslins*.

† *Paisleys* are *Muslin Neck Cloths*.

P L A N

B Y

The COMMISSIONERS and TRUSTEES
for improving FISHERIES and MANUFACTURES in *Scotland*.

For the Application of the REGULAR FUNDS under their Management. ——— For each of three Years, from *Christmas, 1758*.

For encouraging the FISHERIES.

Art. l. s. d.

1. **F**OR Premiums for encouraging the Cod-fishing, a Sum not exceeding 70 0 0
2. For Premiums for searching for Shoals of Herrings, a Sum not exceeding 75 0 0
3. For Salaries to Wreck and Cure Masters of Herrings, a Sum not exceeding 70 0 0
4. For Salaries to General Riding Officers, for superintending and overseeing the Fishing, a Sum not exceeding 85 0 0

Sum for the Fisheries ——— 300

Carried forward £. 300

Brought forward £. 300

For encouraging the LINEN
MANUFACTURE.

Art.

l. s. d.

1. For instructing young Men in the raising and dressing of Flax, and for Utensils to be given them after they are instructed.—For Premiums to stationed Flax-raisers and Flax-dressers.—For Salaries to itinerant Flax-raisers and Flax-dressers for instructing the Country farmers.—And for otherwise promoting the raising and dressing of Flax, a Sum not exceeding 299 0 0
2. For Heckles to be distributed in different Parts of the Country, for diffusing the Art of Heckling, a Sum not exceeding 80 0 0
3. For setting up Spinning-schools.—For Premiums to the best Spinners.—For Wheels and Reels to be distributed.—And for otherwise promoting the spinning of Linen Yarn, a Sum not exceeding 359 0 0
4. For Salaries to Inspectors of Yarn, a Sum not exceeding 45 0 0
5. For encouraging the sorting of Linen Yarn, and selling it duly sorted to Manufactures, at reasonable Rates, a Sum not exceeding 50 0 0
6. For introducing new Fabrics of middle-priced Linens, a Sum not exceeding 30 0 0
7. For small Aids to the Caroline Manufactures, and the foreign Reed-maker at Picardy, near Edinburgh, a Sum not exceeding 63 0 0

Carried forward £. 926 0 0 300

Art.	Brought forward £.	926 0 0	300
8.	For promoting the Manufacture of fine Linen, by Prizes or otherwise, a Sum not exceeding .	170 0 0	
9.	For instructing Apprentices in the Art of Bleaching, a Sum not exceeding	50 0 0	
10.	For promoting Bleaching, by Prizes or otherways, a Sum not exceeding	230 0 0	
11.	For providing Utensils, and making Experiments, for improving and promoting the different Branches of the Manufacture, a Sum not exceeding .	154 0 0	
12.	For Salaries to Lappers and Stamp-masters, a Sum not exceeding	720 0 0	
13.	For furnishing Types for Stampmasters, a Sum not exceeding	30 0 0	
14.	For a Salary to an Officer for examining and abstracting the Stamp-masters Books, a Sum not exceeding	30 0 0	
15.	For Salaries to General Riding Officers, for superintending and overseeing the different Branches of the Manufacture, and for defraying their Travelling-charges, a Sum not exceeding .	390 0 0	
16.	For defraying the Expence of Prosecutions against Transgressors of the Manufacture-laws, a Sum not exceeding	50 0 0	
17.	For a Salary to the Cashier's Clerk, a Sum not exceeding .	20 0 0	
18.	For defraying the Expence of the Secretary's Office, a Sum not exceeding	230 0 0	
	Sum for the Linen Manufacture	—	3000
B	Carried forward £.	3300	

Brought forward £. 3300

*For encouraging the MANUFACTURE
of COARSE WOOL.*

Art.	l. s. d.
1. For Premiums, after the Rate of one Shilling <i>per</i> Stone, Tron Weight, for rough Wool, which shall be actually manufactured into Goods, a Sum not exceeding	350 0 0
2. For Premiums for dying coarse Wool, a Sum not exceeding	20 0 0
3. For teaching the spinning of said Wool, a Sum not exceeding	60 0 0
4. For a Salary to a General Riding Officer, a Sum not exceeding	80 0 0
5. For Prizes for improving the Quality of said Wool, and for Experiments, a Sum not exceeding	190 0 0
Sum for the Woollen Manufacture ———	700
	Total £. 4000

By Order of the said Commissioners and Trustees,

DA. FLINT, *Secretary.*

TRUSTEES OFFICE, } 22 June 1759.
Edinburgh,

P L A N

By the COMMISSIONERS and TRUSTEES for improving Fisheries and Manufactures in Scotland.

For the Distribution of the Sum of £. 3000. for introducing the Linen Manufacture into, and improving it in the HIGHLANDS of SCOTLAND. — For one Year.

Art.

l. s. d.

1. FOR supporting the Linen Manufacture at the new-erected Stations of *Glenmoriston*, *Loch-Broom*, and *Loch-Carron*, a Sum not exceeding £. 348. 8 s. for each Station, conform to the Plan or Estimate annexed, making for these three Stations 1045 4 0
2. For defraying Part of the Wages of two Boatmen for the necessary Service of the Station of *Glenmoriston*, a Sum not exceeding . . . 15 0 0
3. For defraying the Maintenance of young Men from the Highlands, while instructing in the raising and dressing of Flax. — For Premiums to Flax-raisers and Flax-dressers stationed in different Parts of the Highlands. — For Salaries to itinerant Flax-raisers and Flax-dressers, for instructing the Country-farmers. — For purchasing Lintseed and Utensils for dressing Flax to be distributed. — And for otherwise promoting the raising and dressing of Flax in the Highlands, a Sum not exceeding 590 0 0

Carried forward

£. 1650 4 0

Art.	Brought forward	£. 1650	4	0
4.	For introducing and promoting the spinning of Linen Yarn in different Parts of the Highlands ;— by setting up Spinning-schools ;— by giving Premiums to sundry Undertakers to employ the Country in spinning ;—and for otherwise promoting the spinning of Linen Yarn in the Highlands, a Sum not exceeding	900	0	0
5.	For Wheels and Reels to be distributed ; and for Utensils and Premiums to be given for encouraging Tradesmen of different Branches of the Manufacture to set up and carry on their Business in the Highlands, a Sum not exceeding	209	16	0
6.	For a Salary to a General Riding Officer or Surveyor, for superintending and overseeing the different Branches of the Manufacture in the Highlands, and for defraying his Travelling-charges, a Sum not exceeding	140	0	0
7.	For defraying the incidental Expence in the Execution of this Plan, and the additional Expence of the Secretary's Office on that account, a Sum not exceeding	100	0	0
Total		£. 3000	0	0

By Order of the said Commissioners and Trustees,

DA. FLINT, *Secretary*;

TRUSTEES OFFICE, }
Edinburgh, } 22 June 1759.

PLAN or ESTIMATE of what
is necessary for the annual Support
of each of the new-erected manu-
facturing Stations of *Glenmoriston*,
Loch-Broom, and *Loch-Carron*.

Art.

- | | | | |
|---|-------|---|---|
| 1. FOR purchasing Lintseed, to be distributed for sowing, a Sum not exceeding | £. 20 | 0 | 0 |
| 2. For Prizes to be given among the Raisers of the greatest and best Quantities of Flax, a Sum not exceeding | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| 3. For a Salary to a Heckler, a Sum not exceeding | 30 | 0 | 0 |
| 4. For a Salary to a Wheelwright, a Sum not exceeding | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| 5. For a Salary to a Spinning-mistress, and for furnishing Firing, Candle, and other Necessaries to the Spinning-school, a Sum not exceeding | 28 | 0 | 0 |
| 6. Towards defraying the Maintenance of the Scholars at the Spinning-school, a Sum not exceeding | 48 | 0 | 0 |
| 7. For purchasing Wheels and Reels, to be distributed among the Scholars after they are instructed, and other proper Persons in the Neighbourhood of the Station, a Sum not exceeding | 50 | 0 | 0 |
| 8. For Prizes to be given among the Spinners in the Neighbourhood of the Station, a Sum not exceeding | 4 | 8 | 0 |
| 9. For a Salary to a Weaver, a Sum not exceeding | 15 | 0 | 0 |
| 10. Towards defraying the Maintenance of Apprentices with the Heckler, Wheelwright, and Weaver, for the second Year of their Apprenticeships, a Sum not exceeding | 30 | 0 | 0 |

Carried forward £. 248 8 0

Art. Brought forward £. 248 8 0

11. To a Principal Undertaker, for
providing Flax to the People at
the Station and Neighbourhood to
be spun, and for defraying the
Charge of Freight and Carriage,
and other extraordinary Expences
at the Station, a Sum not exceed-
ing 100 0 0

Making in whole for each Station £. 348 8 0

It is the Opinion of many Gentlemen, that a farther Regulation with Respect to Lappers is necessary, and I have procured the *Scotch* Laws for the Regulation and Improvement of their Linen Manufacture to lay before you; it is humbly conceived that your Hon. Board will think it expedient to adopt some of them, and particularly those with respect to Lappers, and Statuteable Yarn, altho' any Change in either of those articles will no Doubt meet with much opposition, but a strict Enquiry will shew the necessity thereof, as it will otherwise be impossible to preserve the reputation of our Linens in Foreign Markets, or keep the Manufacturers and Weavers up to any certain Standard in the different Species of Linens, &c. made in this Kingdom.

The great Increase of the *Scotch* Manufactures is surprizing, considering the many disadvantages they labour under, compared with us who are possessed of Soil and Climate more suitable for raising of Flax, yet their extraordinary Industry and Perseverance surmounts all Difficulties, and more especially as they have introduced Manufactures that neither require a high Colour, nor much Yarn. The Imports of Foreign Linens into *England* are so great, that they still afford sufficient Room for the Employment of all our Inhabitants before the Demand can be fully supplied; and the *Scotch* and *Irish* for the most part being engaged

gaged in different Branches of the Manufacture, and having the Markets of *Spain, Portugal, &c.* open, whose demands are as extensive as those of *England*, leaves no Cause for a Jealousy of interfering with each other in Interest.

It is obvious the Trustees of *Scotland* are of opinion, that their Manufactures receive great Benefit from general Superintendants, Overseers and Inspectors, as a great Share of their Fund is set apart for that purpose, and it is humbly presumed that it will be readily granted by many Gentlemen in this Kingdom, who have expended large Sums of their own, exclusive of the Bounties of your Hon. Board, in promoting and introducing the Linen Manufacture in their respective Countries, that they wou'd at this Day be great gainers had half the Gratuities granted them been with-held, and in place thereof Men of Experience and Integrity been sent to point out to them what Branches of the Manufacture were most suitable to be encouraged among their Spinners, and whether such as required Bleaching were so properly adapted to their respective Conveniencies of Fire and Water, and what sort of apparatus was absolutely necessary, &c. and experience seems to verify, that it is not only requisite in this Kingdom at first Outset to encourage People to pursue new Branches by premiums and Bounties, but it is even necessary to spirit up some Individuals in a particular Manner; and Mankind easily learn what is their Interest, and what not, when they see it explained by many Examples.

The Quantity of Brown Linens stamped for Sale in *Scotland* that are exported without Bleaching, including their *Edinburghs* or *Ozenbrigs*, &c. is nearly half the Manufacture of their Country in number of Yards; their white Linens not above a fifth, and the Medium Value of their Linens declining so much within the last thirty Years shews that they find it most their Interest to go into the coarser Branches.

By

By taking a View in the next Place of the *Irish* Exports in Linen and Linen Yarn during the last 59 Years, the Increase (altho' not ascertained with such exactness as the *Scotch*) will afford much room for observation, and shew to a Demonstration how essentially and speedily useful Laws and the regulations of your Hon. Board operate on this Manufacture.

An ACCOMPT of the Value of Linen Cloth and Yarn exported out of *Ireland* in the following Years.

Years ending at <i>Christmas</i> .	Total Value of Linen.			Total Value of Yarn.		
1700	22250	7	6	27041	13	0
1701	14112	0	0	39106	10	4
1702	16259	15	0	42866	9	2
1703	18173	3	9	37449	14	2
1704	29432	6	10 <i>b.</i>	40137	3	4
1705	31965	0	0	39044	14	2
1706	58395	14	7	34934	3	6
1707	80543	10	10	51914	1	3
Years ending 25th <i>March</i> .						
1708	15540	4	7	12472	10	9
1709	114043	12	8	53859	16	0
1710	105535	17	6	47853	12	0
1711	78425	18	9	43928	10	0
1712	86007	13	5 <i>f.</i>	47496	15	0
1713	113738	10	11 <i>f.</i>	70815	17	0
1714	155002	12	8 <i>b.</i>	158326	7	11 <i>b.</i>
1715	107656	0	6	146283	0	2 <i>b.</i>
1716	109405	5	9	102847	1	9
1717	132018	10	5	189555	12	6
1718	121732	17	0 <i>b.</i>	147527	12	6
1719	127798	5	2 <i>b.</i>	158239	19	9
1720	121899	4	0	94334	1	0
1721	126035	1	6	88178	12	0
1722	170995	4	0	88524	4	0
1723	218927	5	0	94037	7	0
						Years

Years ending 25th March.	Total Value of Linen.			Total Value of Yarn.		
1724	193958	10	6	87564	3	0
1725	193249	7	6	82207	19	0
1726	218419	15	0	105042	11	0
1727	238444	9	9	103726	11	0
1728	234638	4	9	62975	5	6
1729	196395	18	6	65206	13	5
1730	206810	3	6	55485	15	9
1731	220256	15	7	84194	11	1 b.
1732	237034	9	4 b.	92061	16	0
1733	298567	5	0	82372	6	7
1734	340734	18	1 b.	108733	9	0
1735	426339	18	9	95405	10	0
1736	406759	9	4 b.	88463	3	0
1737	409252	7	8	88173	11	0
1738	345049	12	0	95674	13	0
1739	397487	15	0	109202	6	0
1740	441851	8	8	111256	18	0
1741	480516	2	0	129941	4	0
1742	471611	4	0	97984	3	6
1743	403869	8	0	85016	0	0
1744	459366	18	0	108066	1	0
1745	537897	4	6	132398	15	0
1746	512750	0	6	166451	10	0
1747	722541	6	0	173464	0	0
1748	543291	19	4 b.	116508	0	0
1749	594021	3	9	130165	0	0
1750	653360	3	4	134238	5	0
1751	751993	11	10 b.	142459	0	0
1752	621600	3	6	140442	5	0
1753	694119	3	0	139428	5	0
1754	806060	4	0	135567	0	0
1755	891982	4	8	167692	17	0
1756	796288	11	4	161982	15	0
1757	1033913	18	8	186473	5	0
1758	998837	3	0	191970	15	0

The Laws passed the fifth of Queen *Ann* laid the first foundation of an extensive Linen Manufacture in this Kingdom, and the immediate increase of our exports thence forward, and especially after the appointment of a publick Stamp by your Honourable Board about 1721, together with the establishment of a publick Market at the Linen Hall about 1727, shews to a Demonstration how much this Kingdom is interested and benefited by a proper Application of the Linen Fund.

Before the Laws passed the 5th of Queen *Ann*, the Encrease of our Linen Manufacture was scarcely Notice worthy, as Sir *Francis Bruster* observes, that our Linen Exports were 12000*l* in 1689, and in the Year ending *Christmas* 1701, they had only encreased to 14112*l*. Thus slow was our Progress at that Time, but the Manufacture being now firmly established in many Parts of the Kingdom, it will be found less difficult to spread and encrease the Value of our Exports by hundreds of thousands, than it was by thousands sixty Years ago; yet the Linen Manufacture was not totally neglected before that Time, as appears by the Progress made by Lord *Strafford* about 1636, and the County Premiums given by Parliament in *Charles* the Second's Reign.

The Valuation of Linens exported is too-highly estimated at an Average of 16*d*. per Yard, and this will be granted by most Persons, conversant in the Quality of our Linen exports. The computed Number of Yards exported in the Year ending the 25th of *March*, 1758, was 14,982,557 $\frac{1}{4}$, which only exceeds those stamped for sale in *Scotland* the last Year ending 1st of *Novem.* 1758, 4358121 $\frac{1}{8}$, yet, by the *Scotch* going into the Lower Branches so much, and the *Irish* estimate being fixed too-high, we are supposed to have exported more than double the Value of what they stamped for sale. A more particular method in stamping our Linens as practised in *Scotland* wou'd
 always

always enable your Honourable Board to judge exactly of the progress made, and point out where Premiums are necessary to encourage the introduction or extending of any new Branches, and answer many other valuable purposes, such as keeping all Manufacturers and Weavers up to a Standard in Breadth, Quality, &c. However an examination of the *Scotch* Statutes, which I have ready to lay before your Honourable Board when you think proper to call for them, will shew in an ampler manner than any thing I can offer, the necessity of adopting many of them.

I shall now lay before you the account of Foreign Linens imported into *England* in eight Years, at different Periods, during a Course of twenty-five Years; as it would engage too much of your Time to make all the Observations that might be offered on this Head, shall therefore content myself by making but few, as it will afford sufficient Matter for your Consideration.

By an Examination of the Increase and Decrease of the Imports of the several Species of Foreign Linens, and Comparisons made between them, the *Scotch* and ours, you will be better enabled to form Conclusions where we have the most advantageous Prospects of Success, in striking into new Branches of the Manufacture, where ~~their~~ Manufactures are not affected by our Increase, and where the Progress of this Kingdom and *Scotland* have lessened the Imports of foreign Linens, as in *Holland* and *Flanders* Linen, (commonly called *Dutch Holland*) the Imports into *England* have decreased above a Million of Yards, Value 200000 *l. per Ann.* within twenty-five Years, from 1729 to 1755; yet *Russia* Broad, being strong hempen and flaxen Sheeting, has increased greatly in that Time, by the Neglect of the Sheeting Manufacture in this Kingdom, which is chiefly to be ascribed to the Combinations of Weavers, who are mostly bound in an Oath not to make any Thing of the Kind without exorbitant Prices, and there being no effectual Law in this Kingdom to keep Manu-

facturers and Drapers up to a Standard in this or any Branch of the Manufacture, as in most other Countries.

It is humbly hoped that Accounts of what other Countries are doing in this important Branch of Business in which this Kingdom is so deeply interested, where they are founded in Truth, and supported by indisputable Authority, will be acceptable to your Hon. Board. But the Imports of Foreign Linens into *England* in 1751, 1752 and 1753 are laid before you with a farther View, *viz.* to correct an Account given before the Linen Committee of the Hon. House of Commons last Session, as it may be productive of dangerous Consequences to the Publick to represent particular Species of this Manufacture to Gentlemen in your eminent Situation, (possessed of both power and Inclination to encourage whatever may seem most useful to the Kingdom) in so extraordinary a Light with respect to quantity and Value, as might draw your attention solely off the encouragement of all other denominations in pursuit of two Branches that are inconsiderable, compared with others.

The Account in the Report of the Linen Committee stands thus: That there is a considerable quantity of Kentings imported into *England* from *Silesia*, *viz.* Value.

In 1751 there was imported into *England* l. 1019920

In 1752 811512

In 1753 651832

And attributes the Decrease of the Importation to the Rise and Progress of that Manufacture in *Scotland*.

That there are great Quantities of narrow coarse Linens likewise imported into *England*, from twenty-three to twenty-seven Inches broad, and there were imported of that Kind

	Yards.	per Yd.
In 1751	- 35,952,048	worth at 6d. £. 898,801 4
In 1752	- 24,464,964	6d. 611,624 2
In 1753	- 32,488,753	6d. 812,218 16
		And

An ACCOMPT of all foreign Linens imported into that Part of *Great-Britain*, of the Accompt laid before the Hon. House of Commons of *England* by the p 1756; the Species, Length, and Duty paid thereon, certified by *John Tompkins*. Valuation collected from Merchants that usually import such Linens into *England*

DENOMINATIONS.		Valuation per Yard.	Ending <i>Christmas</i> , 1730.	Ending <i>Christmas</i> , 1735.	Ending <i>Christmas</i> , 1741.	End
		2s. od.	3063 3-4 Yards.	16922 1-2	14861 1-4	
	Borelaps,					
	Cambricks,	4 3	2543 10	490440	493328	14
Canvas,	Drilling,	9	1483 1-4	136636 1-4	651442 1-2	96
	Hessens or Barras,	7	893367 1-2	1954926 1-4	1370390	187
	Normandy,	9	1942 1-2	801 1-4	157 1-2	
	Poldavies,	10	35		32 1-2	
	Spruce or Packing,	4 b.	1822486 1-4	4501741 1-4	2250987 1-2	242
	Vitry,	9	65		168 3-4	
Damask.	Napkening Silesia,	1 6	65171	56701	87439	11
	Tabling Silesia,	3 0	22123	29413	32852	43
	Napkening Holland,	1 8	2359	4473	293	
	Tabling Holland,	3 6	417	452	463	
	Napkening Silesia,	1 3	93606	106645	98384	136
Diaper.	Tabling Silesia,	2 10	27842	45731	36112	58
	Napkening Holland,	1 6	5533	6078	1053	
	Tabling Holland,	3 0	2258	2454	483	
	Napkins Holland,	2 1	48	36		
	Russia under half-ell,	4	211646	69547	140114	179
	Dowlafs,	1 0	75	403 3-4	16 1-4	4
	East Country broad,	10	8307 1-2	1027 1-2	135	
	Ditto narrow,	6	153628 3-4	288395	163038 3-4	297
	Germany broad,	1 9	1696202 1-2	1151450	1149281 1-4	1002
	Ditto Narrow,	1 3	21533785	22809728 3-4	22508925	19783
	Hinderlands Brown.	6	304033-4	14661 1-4	36177 1-2	81
	Ditto White,	7	13540	8237 1-2		
	Holland and Flanders Linen,	4 0	1463518 3-4	1764550	1100602 1-2	462
	Holland Duck,	1 3	367096 1-2	188188 3-4	83823 3-4	76
	Russia Duck,	1 1	140668 3-4	175945	223807 1-2	17
	Silesia Lawns,	2 6	267416	133704	113780	490
	Muscovia narrow,	5	262275 1-4	402044 1-4	768652 1-2	992
	Neck Cloths Silesia,	1 6				6
	Ozenbrigs,	7	98855	124555	87992 1-2	43
	Portugal Linen,	9	933 3-4	180		
	Turkey Linen,	6	3987 1-2	3492 1-2	30	
	Old Sheets,	2 9	200000	50740	27480	63
	Russia broad, at Value,	1 7	17278 3-4	204810	195156 1-4	480
	Diaper Russia,	6	11359			
Total Number of Yards,			32050912	38363507 3-4	31637459 3-4	29759
Total Value,			£. 2087110	£. 2313802 12 2	£. 2040558 1 10	£. 1764138
Medium Price,			15d. 3f. per Yd.	14d. b.	14d. 3f.	
Duty paid on Importation,			£. 192859 1 2	£. 223458 12 9	£. 184794 1 2	£. 20075

ain, called *England*, from *Christmas* to *Christmas*, in eight Years, taken out
the proper Officer in the Custom House, *London*, the 28th of *January*,
mpkyns, for *John Oxenford*, Assistant Inspector General for the Quantities; the
England.

Ending <i>Christmas</i> , 1748.	Ending <i>Christmas</i> , 1751.	Ending <i>Christmas</i> , 1752.	Ending <i>Christmas</i> , 1753.	Ending <i>Christmas</i> , 1754.
8746 ¹⁻⁴	14871 ¹⁻⁴	11055	32173 ³⁻⁴	13633 ³⁻⁴
148125 ¹⁻⁴	54289	174395	185520	140347 ¹⁻⁴
961627 ¹⁻²	1195793 ³⁻⁴	785016 ¹⁻⁴	1532671 ¹⁻⁴	1141017 ¹⁻²
1878130	2570226 ¹⁻⁴	1796198 ³⁻⁴	1974267 ¹⁻²	1935661 ¹⁻⁴
160	18 ³⁻⁴			
8 ³⁻⁴				
2424118 ³⁻⁴	4703643 ³⁻⁴	2626303 ³⁻⁴	3716568 ³⁻⁴	3012696
115876	60140	76642	50	87430
43395	32569	38192	82617	29388
	154	30	25948	220
9	88		37	63
136412	88049	87801	96073	111353
58037	29685	31609	30726	30009
55	152	101	255	
51	27	15	13	
711				
179079	496732	304855	331453	43005
4107 ¹⁻²				
336 ¹⁻⁴	17 ¹⁻²	316 ¹⁻⁴	225	
297686 ¹⁻²	236767 ¹⁻²	342567 ¹⁻²	126113 ³⁻⁴	42097
1002558 ³⁻⁴	339223 ³⁻⁴	301780	405985	360697
19783927 ¹⁻²	16878826 ¹⁻⁴	13894864	18982150	15369660
81913 ³⁻⁴	40556 ¹⁻⁴	44757 ¹⁻²	35677 ¹⁻²	28842 ¹⁻²
283 ³⁻⁴		180		
462916 ¹⁻⁴	469327 ¹⁻²	405981 ¹⁻⁴	392168 ³⁻⁴	329117 ¹⁻²
76927 ¹⁻²	65758 ³⁻⁴	50026 ¹⁻⁴	63402 ¹⁻²	25112 ¹⁻²
17340	455983 ³⁻⁴	410840	329026 ¹⁻⁴	199046 ¹⁻⁴
490336	509960	405696	325416	515968
992455	2129271 ¹⁻⁴	1700311 ¹⁻⁴	4689933 ³⁻⁴	1959917 ¹⁻²
6696				
43040	151833 ³⁻⁴	50440	83693 ³⁻⁴	26157 ¹⁻²
400	33 ³⁻⁴	75	316 ¹⁻⁴	82 ¹⁻²
8 ³⁻⁴	82 ¹⁻²	51		
63960	23820	43386	18030	29712
480013 ³⁻⁴	694840	549231 ¹⁻⁴	1396618 ³⁻⁴	528165
29759448 ³⁻⁴	31242681 ¹⁻⁴	24132717	34857130 ¹⁻²	25959399
1764138 14 3 3f	£. 1633532 14 5	£. 1347026 14 4	£. 1908596	£. 1433098 11 11 b.
14d. f.	12d. 3f.	13d.	13d. f.	13d. 3f.
£. 200757 12 2.	£. 182358 2 5	£. 182287 16 9	£. 211212 11 9	£. 194577 14 7

And the Person who gave in this Sketch further said, that he had the above Account from the Custom House of *London*.

By comparing this Account with those Years in the Imports of foreign Linens into *England*, it will appear, from the Number of Yards and Quality of the Goods, what Credit is to be given to it.

The clear flowered Lawns imported into *England* from *Germany* are entered in the Character of *Silesia* Lawns. The long Lawns are entered as narrow *Germany*, and there being (as computed) nearly as great a Value of the latter imported into *England* as of our Linens, they swell that Article so much in Number of Yards beyond the other Denominations, and advance the medium Estimate. There are many other Sub-denominations of foreign Linens entered as narrow *Germany*, viz. *Garlix*, *Dowlas*, *Silesias*, *Ozenbrigs*, and *Pomerania* Linen. What is entered as *Ozenbrigs* (as I am informed) is of superior Quality, and called *Ticklenburgs*.

The foreign Linens are now charged with an additional Duty of 5 *per Cent.* on the Value above what they were subject to before last Session in *England*, and those high Duties encourage the Manufacturers and Importers to change the Species, so as to import them in Characters subject to the smallest Duties, and even encourages the smuggling of considerable Quantities of the finer Sorts; and, it is believed by many Merchants in *England*, that a new Regulation of the Titles and Duties paid on the different Species of foreign Linens, (there being many new Kinds introduced since the last Regulation in the Book of Rates) would make a very remarkable Addition to the Revenue.

Your Hon. Board have, with great Propriety and Wisdom, called on the High Sheriffs of the several Counties, to report the State and Progress of the Linen and Hempen Manufacture in their respective Counties,

Counties, and what Encouragement would be most proper to improve and extend it therein. When their returns are considered, it is humbly presumed that the report made to you in 1755 will correspond with them as much as can be expected from a View so limited and cursory.

An Honourable Baronet in his Letter to the high Sheriff of the County of *Cork* has wrote fully on this Subject for that County, but it is believed the Scheme he proposes will be too expensive. However his example in Introducing and promoting this Manufacture in that County hath done more than writing Volumes cou'd effect.

It is observable that whoever makes the Improvement of the Linen Manufacture in this Kingdom any part of his Study, has always some favourite Scheme to offer to your Hon. Board, and it is humbly submitted to your Consideration, whether the making * publick Markets for Linen and Linen Yarn throughout the Kingdom (where they are not yet established) is not a rational and likely Scheme for promoting and extending the Manufacture effectually.

There have been many examples of this Sort in different Parts of the province of *Ulster*, both for introducing the Manufacture and promoting particular Species of it, none of which have failed of Success. But those Schemes have always been under

* To give £. 100 Premium in manner following, in twenty five Counties, and drop them as Markets become considerable in each County, viz. one Premium of £. 50 one of £. 30 and one of £. 20 in each County respectively, (except the Counties of Antrim, Down, Derry, Tyrone, Armagh, Monaghan and Cavan, those having good Markets and no occasion for this Premium.) To the Merchant or Draper who shou'd buy and export to any part beyond the Seas, the greatest number of Yards of Linen Cloth, Gray or white, twenty-five Inches wide or upwards £. 50, to the second £. 30, and to the third in quantity £. 20.

under the Management of some active Persons that have given Life to the Undertaking, and raised an Emulation and Spirit among the Competitors.

It is humbly submitted to your Consideration whether this Scheme may not be carried into execution in such manner as to suit the whole Kingdom, except where Markets are established, and 3000*l.* or less wou'd pay all Premiums and Contingencies attending it, and if the success of it answered what might be reasonably expected, it wou'd in seven Years be an effectual Means of encouraging Flax growing, Spinning and Weaving, and in a great Measure prevent Combinations among Workmen. It wou'd greatly improve the quality of our Manufactures, and raise and support their reputation in Markets abroad.

It is very difficult, however, to form any Scheme that will not be liable to many Obstructions in the Execution, unless the Progress of the Claimants and Competitors in each County were examined, and attended to, assisted and instructed in exporting what they Bought up, and on many occasions the Value of their Goods advanced to them on exportation, otherways Frauds might be committed, and the Meritorious discouraged, and if once the Spirit of Competition was damped, it had been better that such Premiums should never be offered; the several Competitors might be directed to encourage the Manufacture of particular Species in particular Counties, and by that means lead the Inhabitants into such Branches as were most suitable to the quality of the Yarn spun therein.

If a Scheme of this sort should be deemed worthy the attention of your Honourable Board, and put in Practice, it might be expedient to continue it for three or more Years, in order to encourage the greater Number to become Adventurers, and there is little doubt but the success of Individuals the first Year wou'd raise such a Spirit and Emulation as wou'd still encrease the Number of Competitors and Claimants the second Year.

I have

I have tried at great expence and with much trouble of late to establish a Species of the Linen Manufacture, called *Britannias*, and other Light Goods, such as *Linings* and *Linens* for half-stifning, in *Connaught*, those Manufactures being suitable to the greater part of the Yarn spun in that province, but without Success, the Weavers being generally very distant from each other, and accustomed to Idleness, and spending much of their Time in Labouring, make such slow returns as to discourage Manufacturers to make Establishments among them without being encouraged by Premiums to pay Overseers and other necessary expences attending new establishments. However, having instructed some Gentlemen who have Factories in that province, how to get those Branches manufactured, they are succeeding very well, and the Foreign Imports and *Scotch Brown* Linens stamped for Sale will shew the vast importance of those Manufactures to this Kingdom, where there is so much Yarn to spare, and Numbers unimployed most of the Year. But it is humbly conceived, that publick Markets encouraged would introduce such Species of Manufactures into each County as is most suitable to their Yarn and Spinning, with very little trouble, and at a small expence.

Having already exceeded the Bounds I had prescribed for myself in this Letter, hope you'll excuse the Liberty I take in addressing it to your Hon. Board, and shou'd any thing I have here laid before you require a farther explanation, I shall be always ready to do every thing I can to give you Satisfaction. Permit me to assure you that nothing gives me greater pleasure than to have it in my power to lay any thing that may contribute to the Increase of the Linen Manufacture before your Hon. Board, and I have the Honour to remain, with the utmost Respect,

Your most obedient and most humble Servant,

Robert Stephenson.



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